



MARK PEPPING

OBJECT

Submission ID: 218056

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Other issues</i>
Location: New South Wales 2577	
Attachment: N/A	

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I write in opposition of the Development Application for the proposed Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility.

The proposed Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility located on the north western fringe of Moss Vale is a major concern in an area experiencing population growth, highly valued agricultural sectors, a drinking water catchment and an environment containing endangered ecological flora and fauna.

I am not opposed to the location being established as an industrial area creating essential employment opportunities for the resident population. Likewise I am not opposed to the need to establish a plant facility that attempts to recycle and reuse plastics which have become a significant waste byproduct of modern society. In fact, I commend the proponents in attempting to do something about it. However, such a facility and operation needs to be located in a location which will not impact on residential populations, livestock agricultural operations, water catchments and environmentally important habitats.

The population of the Southern Highlands is approximately currently 56,000 people and set to grow by a further 20,000 over the next 10-20 years. More than sixty percent of the population lives within a 15 kilometre radius of the proposed plant. Prevailing winds from the northwest and southwest will disperse minute particles into the air settling in and around the population. This will mean by 2040 some 45,000 residents will be permanently living within the outfall area. On top of this permanent population, tourists and visitors to the region will be exposed to the contaminated air. When the likely particles settle on roof tops, vegetation etc, the regularity of high winds across the region experienced due to the elevation of the Southern Highlands will be elevating the particles into the atmosphere.

Whilst there is a clear and apparent health concern to humans of the operation of such a plant in close proximity to resident populations, the impact to the agricultural industry is further paramount. The Southern Highlands is a fast growing equine region with many thoroughbred produces relocating from other locations within NSW. The attractiveness of the Southern Highlands has been the clean and uncontaminated air and water for livestock. The impact of small plastic particles being ingested by livestock though breathing and eating contaminated pastures will be devastating to the producers and our region.

The Southern Highlands and in particular Wingecarribee Shire is ninety percent water catchment area for the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment. The importance of the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment was firmly established when the proposed Hume Coal Project was considered and eventually refused due to the risk on water quality and groundwater sources. The potential impact on the Sydney drinking water supply catchment is a major concern particularly when it is know that droughts in recent history has seen Warragamba Dam reduce to 30% capacity. Should the catchment area comprising the Wingecarribee Shire of some 2,500 sq km potentially put at risk the water catchment or receiving waters, including from groundwater sources into the rivers, the situation could become catastrophic for the Sydney Metropolitan population.

The Southern Highlands is home to nationally at risk flora and fauna species which survive and flourish within our environment due to the clean and uncontaminated air, water and soils. The Local Council and State Government with the Community have spent many decades protecting and preserving the natural environment in order to ensure the unique biological features of the region are not lost for ever. Deposits of plastic particles into the rivers and dams, into the soils and on vegetation are likely to impact wildlife habitats.



It is clear that our society has developed a modern problem with the means of recycling and reusing plastics. Opportunities to manage such waste and recycle where possible is certainly required for future generations. However, such facilities need to be located where the risk to human life, agriculture and environment can be managed in a low risk manner. The Southern Highlands as a growth region, important agricultural sector and critical environmental attributes cannot be compromised into the future by an industry that is largely untested and risky.

I implore the Independent Planning Commission to refuse this Development Application for the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility.

Mark Pepping
